

Zujenia- https://www.darkjedibrotherhood.com/members/14615/character_sheet

K'tana- https://www.darkjedibrotherhood.com/members/13419/character_sheet

Athletics Training with a Moody Twi'lek

"My Goddess, girl. Your mind is frantic mess of nerves. Do'ya not know how to calm down?"

"Says you!"

"Hey now! No talkin back to your Gate Wardeness!"

"I thought it was Ga-"

"WHADIDIJUSAY?!"

Suddenly, Zujenia was on her rear, sitting before the K'tana who now crouched before the Half-Ryn wearing a smug smile.

"What was that?!"

"I kicked your feet from under ya. I would think that was obvious." The violet Twi'lek never stopped smiling as she outstretched her hand. "I want you to learn a few things today."

K'tana paused as the Acolyte took her hand and she did something she never would have considered herself capable. The Savant pulled the younger woman to her feet with one hand and, with one swift movement, slapped Zujenia with the other.

Although the younger woman tried to duck, she was simply not faster than the trained Assassin. The blow struck Zujenia's cheek, stinging painfully. The strike was not hard, at least not as hard as it could have been, but it startled the Acolyte enough into stepping back.

K'tana's smile was gone. Her blank gaze somehow still tore through Zujenia; like that of a wild animal locking down its prey.

"Lesson one, never trust anyone here. No one in the Brotherhood means you well. We are all stepping stones to further the whims of another. Everyone means everyone else harm, intentionally or otherwise. We would all kill one another if your Mistress asked, tear each other to shreds. Every one of us. You cannot trust your life in the hands of anyone other than yourself. And if you are too weak to kill, too afraid to take a life to save your own, you will die."

A mixed look of concern and pity momentarily flicked across the Half-Ryn's face, but she held her ground, staring down the assassin before her.

"But...I won't always need to kill, right? I can fight without needing to."

K'tana simply smiled and gestured to the Acolyte's feet.

"Lesson two, your feet are waaaay too far apart. That's how I can trip you so easily. Turn your back foot slightly. A little more. Perfect. Now bend your knees, don't lock them up."

The Half-Ryn was startled by the sudden shift in the other woman's behaviour. One moment K'tana was sweet, her smile inviting and warm, and the next second her words were hard and cold. Her eyes never followed suit. The Twi'lek's blank, green gaze remained placid despite what she said or the tone her voice took.

So, not knowing what else to do, Zujenia followed the moody Twi'lek's instructions to the best of her ability.

"Okay, now that you have balance and know where to place your feet..." K'tana grinned, "watch this."

The next moment the violet woman took several swift steps toward the nearest wall and, becoming a blur of movement, ran up the wall, flipping backwards to land again on her feet. She gracefully pirouetted around to face the Acolyte in such a dramatic manner, her headtails following the momentum of her turn, that it managed to distract Zujenia from the fact that the Savant unsheathed a dagger.

It was not until the blade whizzed past the Half-Ryn's head, barely skimming her white mane, that Zujenia realized what happened.

K'tana sashayed past the trainee and pulled her weapon out of the dummy's torso. She gave a slight giggle, coming to face the Acolyte with a perfectly crooked smile.

"I was aiming for it's head, but the look on your face was too funny. I got distracted."

Before Zujenia could speak, K'tana was already raising her hand to cut her off.

"Everyone in Arcona **CAN** kill you. You truly believe that you can survive without killing?" she paused to chuckle, "well, then. I can at least teach you how to dodge."

Zujenia simply nodded, feeling taken aback but awaiting the Gate Wardeness' next demands.

"Timeros taught Atty how to dodge, but I've heard that story too many times to relate it. All of the Master Student bonding of our Lady Consul with big *chud*-faced, *frang* biter."

The Twi'lek bristled before the Acolyte could ask what the words meant, suddenly snapping back into motion. She was a burst of movement, grabbing Zujenia by the shoulders, frantically analyzing the other woman's face.

“Please don't ever think I'm like him. I'll never hurt you in training. My job is to put your life at risk, but I won't do that while you learn. Don't believe that I ever want to kill you. If I am ordered to do so, I will. But I will never choose to do so on my own. I watch my people's backs. If any of them, Shadow Gate, ever hurt you...You're the Shadow Lady's apprentice... she'd never forgive me if I let-”

It was Zujenia's turn to interrupt the frantic, babbling Savant. She placed her right hand on her left shoulder, covering K'tana's hand with her own, and gave a soft smile.

“Atty would forgive you. I don't know you as well, but she sure does. And...I don't think she'd trust me in your care if she felt you'd do anything to hurt me.”

K'tana suddenly flashed a disarming smile and gave Zujenia's cheek a pat.

“Oh, Atty doesn't know you're here. Well, I guess she probably knows by now, but I didn't tell her. Ya may be her 'prentice, but you're *my* Gatekeeper. And she and I don't...we...” K'tana suddenly pulled back and began a fitful bout of manic laughter.

“WE DON'T ALWAYS SEE EYE TO EYE!!” The Twi'lek's lilting voice became shrill as she slowly sat down, placing her head in her hands and giggling.

A few moments of a stunned Acolyte, watching uncomfortably as her not-so-legit instructor struggled to get back to her feet, was enough for the Twi'lek to calm back down. As her laughter subsided, K'tana began apologizing through sharp inhalations.

“I'm sorry! I never, like, EVER! Get to make eye jokes!”

Zujenia forced a soft 'heh', not really catching the joke, but nodded her head.

“She's SO quick on those. I guess it would be hard to make them first.”

K'tana nodded as she spoke then gestured to Zujenia to follow her closer to the wall, stopping and pointing to the floor. The Gatekeeper adjusted her position until K'tana smiled at her.

“Okay, now we're just gonna go through the motions, real slow. The most important thing is knowing your balance and where *exactly* to place your feet. Oh! And HOW you place your feet!”

The Half-Ryn cocked her head, flooding with curiosity as to how many ways one could place their feet on a wall.

Zujenia learned just that over the next hour as K'tana showed the Acolyte, through trial and error, that if the foot was tilted at the wrong angle an ankle sprain could occur. Which resulted in her being knocked off balance. If there was not enough pressure placed on the back leg as she pushed off, again, it would tilt her too far and onto her rear.

“Ya got a wide enough hips that this shouldn't do too much damage, but I don't wanna bruise your tailbone. Err, tail? Whatever. So! This time, I want you to start from further back. Take two running steps, then I want to see that foot land on the wall EXACTLY like I showed you.”

Zujenia was exhausted. Her thighs and calves burned with every step, but she knew that once she got through this, K'tana had promised to help her through the pain and let her rest.

The genetics of her Ryn side did her well and the Acolyte managed to do exactly as the Twi'lek demanded. Zujenia ran the two steps as fast as she could and leapt towards the wall perfectly. Her foot lay flat against the wall for the briefest of instances before she pushed away and landed back on both feet.

K'tana beamed with pride and clapped her hands together with excitement.

“Oh, Zuji!!! That was it!”

The avant hesitated, causing the Acolyte some concern as the Twi'lek's face took a serious cast again.

“But you don't get to rest yet. Do fifteen laps around the sparring room. Your legs are burning, your chest feels heavy, you're hungry and tired. I know.”

“So why?!” The frustration was clear on the Gatekeeper's face, her brow creasing in anger and exhaustion.

“Because running through the pain is the only thing that will keep your stupid-blueish-butt safe. You don't wanna kill? Learn to run. Learn to always be in excruciating agony. Be happy that you don't have any broken ribs this time.”

“You wouldn't-?”

“To save your life? To make sure that your ridiculous ideals are maintained and you can survive an ass kicking that makes you feel half dead? In Kika'leki's name, I would consider stabbing you and making you run just to make sure you live long enough to hate me for it.”

The way K'tana spoke was in a strange manner. Her words seemed threatening and cold but her mannerism was that of a concerned and protective parent. She clearly believed that this would help the Half-Ryn survive.

“And I want you to circle, as fast as you can, every sparring dummy you pass by. You falter, slip, crash...you start over.”

Zujenia was in tears by the time K'tana told her to stop. She could not keep count of her laps, having slipped and crashed enough times to be hardly conscious when the Twi'lek yelled.

As the the Acolyte held her knees with her hands, huffing and fighting to catch her breath, K'tana calmly walked over and adjusted the Half-Ryn's posture. She applied slight pressure to Zujenia's upper back, forcing her to straighten slightly.

"Keep your spine straight, inhale slowly. Through your nose. Now slowly exhale from your mouth. This helps your diaphragm expand and gets more oxygen to your lungs." As she spoke, the Savant began rubbing the muscles between Zujenia's shoulder blades. The motion was soothing and the combined advice helped the younger woman breathe easier.

When the Acolyte seemed to be calming down and the adrenaline burned out, the pain made it's presence known. It ripped through her body and tore through her eyes, forcing tears down her cheeks.

K'tana's sudden departure was easily missed by the gasping woman but her reappearance was not. The Twi'lek came in, pushing a hovering gurney, and gestured for Zujenia to stand once more.

She helped the Half-Ryn onto the bed and wordlessly pushed her out and down the hall. Zujenia had passed out by the time they reached the medbay. K'tana smiled down on the girl. The Twi'lek knew she had pushed too hard, but it was difficult for her to say stop when the other woman was working so hard.

"Hey, Pinkie! Yeah you, blue-eyes!" K'tana yelled at a nurse, gesturing him over with a finger. "You know a guy with a green tat and spiked hair who works here?"

"I'm guessing you don't know his name..."

"Why would I know his name? You Humies, are so...easily described. Being all...unique and all."

The nurse scowled at the Twi'lek's bigoted nature and stalked over to the intercom, dialing a number and getting an immediate response. The man on the other end was good natured about the cause for being called in, perhaps even excited.

When the Mirilan entered the room, K'tana was already making her way to leave. She smiled politely and pointed to Zujenia's legs.

"So, you remember when that guy lightsabered my kneecap and Timeros made you hold me captive?"

A quick smirk and a nod told her that he did.

"I'm gonna need you to soak and rub her legs like you did for me. She's gonna wake up wishing I took a lightsaber to her. Could you make sure it's not...too bad?"

Never one for too many words, especially with K'tana, the Mirilan smiled and nodded his head. But he caught her arm as she moved passed the curtain of the gurney.

"You know he's expecting you back to the Last Light...a week ago, right?"

"Yeah...shutup. Make sure Zuji is okay, then worry about me...and so you know, he's really, really a big softy."

She meant to giggle, but she was just as tired as Zujenia - if not as sore - so it came out more as a whisper. The Twi'lek pulled away and slipped out of the medbay, leaving the Consul's apprentice with a very experienced masseuse.